



## NATIONAL LAW UNIVERSITY DELHI

### *AILET- 2020- SOME BASIC GUIDANCE & RESPONSE*

#### *ABOUT*

#### *THE NEW RPT MODEL*

July 2, 2020

Greetings from National Law University Delhi!!

Dear Candidate(s),

In view of our recently released revised notification (dated June 30,2020) of AILET Admission, some candidates have written to us about many issues that they find crucial in the conduct of the test. We thought it proper to give a reasoned and detailed response through a public response as it may not be possible for us to reply to you all individually.

AILET is an annual entrance exam which stands for All India Law Entrance Test conducted by the National Law University Delhi for its law courses' admissions. This test is widely known and acclaimed for its fairness and credibility, with its applicants increasing steadily every year.

The whole world is facing a global pandemic called the Covid 19 since last man months. In these unprecedented yet very challenging times, everything and everyone has remarkably and by and large successfully shifted to an online medium. We have been able to avail of what was existing in hand and make the best of it in times of need. The resource of remote online access not only enables us to remain safely at home, but also at the same time to not lose out on opportunities that we would have availed physically and as in the normal course of our lives.

For any entrance test, there could be only three models of holding the examination. In the following paragraphs, we give you a clear and comparative idea about these choices:

**1. A pen and paper test, physically at a designated centre –**

AILET has always followed the age-old way of conducting a written test at various centres across the country. Yet, for the first time keeping in mind the current scenario of corona cases increasing rapidly all across India and in the context of

safety and social distancing – a pen and paper physical test is highly impossible and logically improbable. This nowhere follows the rule of social distancing as strictly prescribed by the Govt. of India and also by the WHO, to curb and curtail the spread of this virus. A written test at a centre is also not considered in the good will for us to imply as an educational institution which places a strong faith in student health and welfare. This sort of testing mode cannot overrule the risk of infection for students travelling to various centres away from the security of their homes and touching the testing materials, desks, chairs and classrooms that would have been assigned in a physical testing module. Even the highest levels of sanitisation would not completely overrule the potentiality of infection to many in such a case. Hence, in the situation that India is facing with its infected cases and death toll spiking to alarming levels each and every day, a pen and paper test is out of the question right now or anytime sooner. Such a form of centralised testing is thus not possible.

**2. A centre based online computer-based test –**

This model of examination entails calling young students and even their understandably concerned and fully invested parents out into different parts of various cities in the country. This open access to outside environment for even a few hours of the test along with commuting time is enough time, place, and interaction for more than some to be potentially at risk of infection; given the perilous times when people have been strongly advised to remain inside their homes and only venture out in case of emergencies and following social distancing. In the case of centre based exam, many would be resorting to public transport in the form of buses, autos, rickshaws; or communal travelling in cabs; or collective travel in one car – all of which potentially puts a considerable amount of people at a fairly high risk of infection. The pandemic has reached a dangerous form of infection called ‘asymptomatic’. Hence, it is a matter of grave concern to us that it is not just one point to consider of people bravely venturing outside their homes to conduct and attempt the test, but also of the long term and large extent of this ‘one-time’ exposure.

The identified centre based examination amounts to taking people in groups and exposing not only them but in extension their family members back home - to mass infection. This large mobilisation of people is again against the Govt. specified rules and regulations for not holding any kind of event which exceeds a certain number of persons and follows the most stringent levels of social distancing. Centres for conducting AILET are not too many, only 30-40 across the country, in a normal scenario, which might decrease in the current situation, and therefore be far and wide. Hence, it is a fact to be seriously considered that not only is there a possibility of the centres being too far from a candidate’s home and require one or many modes of transport, but also such a level of nation wide examination can potentially

be cancelled if any centre suddenly falls under a containment zone. Also due to one centre being contained or one case being tested positive later in a centre, can have hazardous consequences in terms of risking in conducting this 'All India Test'. This amounts to highest levels of risk taking in terms of putting one/more centres to possibility of test cancellation and all its candidates to risk of not just infection but also trouble and disappointment in cases of cancellation. It will be extremely difficult for the University and for NTA to conduct the examination again, or to suddenly arrange for alternative centres in case of some declared containment zones due to Covid 19.

This option that has been availed and tested previously on multiple occasions by institutions, does not seem a very viable or safest option either. It was carefully considered and then also very justifiably rejected to not hold AILET as an online centre-based examination. Therefore, this form of centre based RPT is anyway better than conducting a physical pen and paper test at an identified/designated centre. Even the most stringent and immaculate of sanitisation cannot possibly guarantee a complete safety and non-infection free space to students and all concerned at the centres.

Both the above two models of examination involve definite risks which we all might not be prepared to handle if contingency arises. Also, we as a national educational institution renowned for providing the highest levels of premium academic exposure to the students cannot put enough faith in either a pen and paper written examination nor an online centre- based examination – at this point in time and place. We also want to follow as far as possible the MHA's guidelines as prescribed in the Unlock part 2 of the Covid-19, which stipulates that as much as possible education and examinations should be conducted online, "Online/distance learning shall continue to be permitted and shall be encouraged...". Therefore, in the best interests and large welfare of everyone we choose to not endanger students, parents, examiners, etc. to mass external exposure.

Hence, under the current circumstances of emergency like situation and paucity of resources, the above two forms of examination have been ruled out.

### **3. A home based online RPT (Remote Proctored Testing) –**

The most safe and sound option left to fully exercise after ruling out the previous two models of examination is through an online computerised home based remotely proctored test. This mode of examination in such times has many advantages, not just in terms of safety for all, but also in terms of level of comfort of own home or familiar surroundings. It is a psychological fact that for one to prosper one needs to feel safe and be in trusted environment, which we feel will

be the advantage of a home based online AILET mode of examination. This also nullifies the stress and strain that all the candidates and their families would be facing owing to the external exposure during travelling to a test centre and while using and touching so many surfaces and materials like a computer, mouse, keypad, chair, etc. Regarding the format of the test, the only change is in the mode of writing – from written to online mode, rest all of the facets of the examination remain unchanged. The AILET 2020 is exactly on the same format as that of previous years, it is of 90 minutes and comprises of 100/150 questions depending upon the Course. The previous year test papers are available for reference to the pattern followed in the previous years.

Amongst the three options, this was considered the most feasible, the most less-risk involving on a larger scale, and the most widely permissible at this point in time. This not only is the safest in terms of alleviating academic risk to possibility of cancellation of centres or of the test itself, but also in terms of possibility of risking mass exposure and spreading further of the virus.

Hence, both on humanitarian grounds of saving lives and preserving futures of students, and on patriotic grounds of following the govt. ordained guidelines in cases of emergencies and contextually for Covid-19 – the best available and easily exercised option is RPT from home examination. This is a one-time exceptional case resorted to in this time of emergency and lack of safest options available, that AILET has been made an RPT from home examination. Out of the three models available, the previous two are with potential but serious risks having the capacity to harm at a mass level, in-built with difficulties that cannot be overcome at a time of social distancing and a pandemic.

Admittedly, we driven by unavoidable compulsions and are pushed to choose the path of least resistance and risk. We have considered all arguments and then come to this conclusion that it is safest and best for all that AILET be an RPT mode of examination. We understand that there may be some issues for candidates who are not familiar with the concept of an online and not a written at a centre paper and have other issues regarding the resources needed for the test. We will try to alleviate these concerns and urge all candidates to foster more faith in the mode of examination decided for AILET 2020.

All the concerns regarding AILET 2020 can be deftly dealt with as the date of notifying students on RPT mode of testing was on 1<sup>st</sup> July 2020, while the exam is on the 18<sup>th</sup> August 2020 from 11.00 A.M. to 12.30 P.M. (90 minutes) on RPT mode. This is an ample amount of time for them to make preparations regarding the resources they would need or need to

make available for attempting the examination. This time has also been given to familiarise with the switch from pen and paper to a computerised online test from home.

The various possible concerns of candidates applying for AILET 2020 are addressed as under:

1. Internet constraints, lack of connectivity –  
The concerns regarding internet speed, power cut, and connectivity issues are understandable but largely unavoidable many a times. It can be best dealt with by keeping a backup option of attempting to switch to the mobile phone with its internet facility, or visiting a cybercafé with a reliable internet connectivity and electricity flow. The basic hourly charges of using internet at a cybercafe are on an average INR 50-100, which is not much, considering the fact that more amount would have been originally spent while travelling to a physical examination centre.
2. Lack of resources - computers and/or Internet or Wifi connections at homes –  
This issue can be tackled with some forward thinking and making arrangements with neighbours/relatives/friends who have computer and internet connectivity and which can be either lent for the examination or used to take the test. The option of visiting a cyber or internet café nearby the home can also be explored. Sufficient time is in hand to make necessary arrangements, places and people who can help can be identified and availed. In most difficult cases, even a travel from your town/village to the district headquarters for gaining better cyber stations may be a good option. Given that the traditional AILET Examination also involve the travel of hundreds of kilometres for the candidates as we have very limited number of centres, this option is valid.
3. Affordability of IT-enabled platforms all across India/economic aspect of conducting online exams –  
Unlike the travel financials involved in a conventional mode of center based examination, an online from home examination requires a computer and internet, both of which can be borrowed or paid for at a cybercafe. If a candidate feels compelled to spend on a computer, then it can be considered as an investment as all studies at not just law universities but all colleges and universities entail taking or exchanging study material on computers.
4. System issues like computer devices not working, technical issues like time of examination not properly recorded, etc. –  
All of the technical problems such as inability to submit, lack of time, power cut, computer getting frozen, etc. will all be deftly and satisfactorily dealt with in the two webinars on AI based AILET. Before the test, the NTA (National Testing Agency) will provide the detailed information and guidance to the aspirants. Two webinars & one mock test for the AILET 2020 will be conducted by NTA to acclimatise students on an online form of testing. This will also be acquainting them with the whole process and deal with possible contingencies in case of such issues. Both these forms of testing and preparation will help candidates deal with their concerns better and be better prepared for an online test.

5. IT literacy of students/ability of the students to use computer applications –  
The basic computer literacy is needed in attempting this online examination, the same as any 12<sup>th</sup> class pass or attempted student would have. Students would have become familiar with online forms and submissions with filling the AILET examination form and fees.
6. Impose the online system of examination on students used to reading physical notes, books and using pen and paper –  
Many examinations are being shifted to the online mode of testing, as it is being considered a viable norm to shift everything online, especially in such times of national emergencies. A pen and paper test in such a time is not possible, so even at a centre based examination the model would have to be online and computer based. Many students are used to filling online forms such as Google forms and other and are familiar with such online interfaces. The students have been given the opportunity of over one and half months starting from 1<sup>st</sup> July 2020 to the date of the online AILET on 18<sup>th</sup> August 2020, to better acquaint themselves with online based tests.
7. Security being a challenge in online examination –  
NLU Delhi has enlisted National Testing Agency (NTA) to conduct the AILET 2020. NTA is a govt. agency which is renowned for being a specialised, autonomous, and self-sustained testing organisation. They are enlisted by educational institutions to conduct entrance examinations for admission/fellowship like JEE, NEET, UGC-NET, etc.; all of the mentioned examinations being conducted by NTA in 2020 too.  
It is the most trustworthy and safest option for conducting online based tests in India that are remotely attempted by students either from a centre or in this case from home. NTA is a credible and reliable govt. approved agency known for its quality and confidentiality, hence any matters of security will not be a concern as this is not privately owned but publicly regulated. As the AILET 2020 is being handled by the NTA, all the student concerns will be addressed in the two webinars keeping in mind all contingencies possible. NTA is also enabling itself for conducting successful home based tests (<https://www.hindustantimes.com/education/nta-developing-capacity-to-hold-home-based-tests/story-1OUsBUL9o3wOzuD6DCBhXM.html>). To be an AI assisted and remote proctored, this edition of AILET dispels all misgivings of any foul play as the level and quality of AI use is going to be of very high quality. It will not only deter not any unfair means but also detect the same with the digital evidence on the spot. And in all such case immediate disqualification would be only the consequence so the candidates need not worry on this aspect.
8. Inability to take test –  
The University has allowed the option of withdrawal to the candidates; however, we would like to urge the students to stay with us. We have become the 2<sup>nd</sup> best law university in India for the past three years as ranked by NIRF in 2018, 2019 and 2020; and we strive to achieve more.

The University has decided to allow the option of withdrawal to the candidates, who want to withdraw their application for admission to B.A.LL.B. (Hons), LL.M. and Ph.D. Programmes. Such candidates can withdraw their application through the following link and provide their bank account details for refund of application fee paid by them: <https://forms.gle/pW5czuLwsgv9rL4aA>

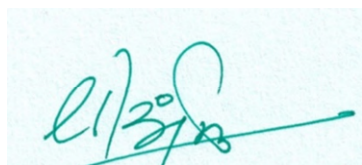
The candidates are required to login to the above link by using their registered Email ID for the AILET 2020. The above link for withdrawal of application form will be activated from 1st July to 7th July, 2020. Any request for the withdrawal of AILET 2020 registration will not be entertained after July 7, 2020.

9. In the worst case scenario, where you are in no position of excessing any of the measures suggested we will try to assist you with your queries. You may write to us - [admission@nludelhi.ac.in](mailto:admission@nludelhi.ac.in) / or call – 9899920124 ( from July 3, 2020) between 10 a.m. to 5 p.m.
10. There will be more technical guidance from the NTA side about the operational details and guidelines regarding the conduct of AILET that will allay your apprehensions comprehensively.
11. I wish to share the RPT mode has inspired the confidence among a large number of candidates as more and more fresh applications are reaching to us.

We can say confidently that, in the given circumstances, we have resorted to the best choice and this would prove to be the best solution.

We wish all good health and success, and urge everyone to keep in their best spirits and positive attitude towards the future.

Best wishes

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read 'G S Bajpai', is written over a light blue rectangular background.

( PROF. G S BAJPAI)

REGISTRAR